A 2D animated serialized
fantasy-comedy adapted from the highly acclaimed
Random House book series "Heck: Where The Bad Kids Go".

HECK
YEARBOOK

Heck School For the
Soon-to-be-Damned

13 x 22 min

9 STORY
MEDIA GROUP

For 12-year old bookish Milton and his rebellious 15-year old sister, Marlo, school is heck, literally. They attend the "Heck School for the Soon-to-be-Damned," a nether-worldly reform school in the afterlife.

What the HECK to expect

Mixing the macabre with irreverent comedy, HECK follows one big serialized story. In the first episode, siblings Milton and Marlo Fauster are struck by lightning and pass from the world of the living to limbo, where they're enrolled in the brand new "Heck School for the Soon-to-be-Damned." What they don't know is that when they graduate they must take their S.A.T.s (Soul Aptitude Test), and if their souls are too heavy with sin, they'll go directly "down below." These are the stakes! The siblings attempt to escape Heck and get their lives back - a feat that's technically possible because when you're in limbo you're not officially dead, just "almost dead." So there's a sliver of hope!

Celebrated Book Series

Dale E. Basye's acclaimed series has generated eight novels to date and was published by Random House. The books feature the art of noted illustrator Bob Dob: whose creepy-cool illustrations capture the essence of this darkly comedic, highly stylized world, and will define the "Heck" look for the show.

Why HECK? And why now?

Being a kid a can be a scary thing, especially today. You have little control over your life, and you're deeply affected by the seemingly thoughtless choices your parents and teachers (and political leaders) make without being given a say-so in them. Kids are observant, and scary/funny stories can give them a safe place to frame their anxieties, to give them a name, laugh at them, and then to ultimately face them. There's a fantastic history of macabre/irreverent entertainment for the under 16 set that externalizes kid fears: from Roald Dahl books, *A Series of Unfortunate Events, Goosebumps, Beetlejuice, Stranger Things, Coraline, ParaNorman, Time Bandits,* to *The Addams Family*. HECK is born of this tradition and seeks to carry it forward.

The Heart of the Show

Milton and Marlo bicker and disagree on things like many brother and sisters do, but the dire circumstances they find themselves in force them to face their sibling differences head on. Deep down, Milton's a "good kid", and knows that there has to have been some kind of mistake - he doesn't belong in Heck. Marlo, however, is far less sure, as she has a rebellious streak and worries she might have ended up in the right place. What do they have in common? They both want out! So they embark on a wild and daring adventure that will change them and the afterlife forever. Milton and Marlo are unlikely heroes who, (spoiler alert!) like a pair of teen Spartacuses, lead all the kids in Heck to freedom and back to the land of the living in the final episode of the first season.

Heck School For The Soon To Be Damned

The series takes place in a twisted yet familiar environment: school! There are teachers, bullies, homework, terrible cafeteria food, field trips, arch-rivals, hall monitors, etc. – all have a fantastical, ghoulish, whimsical spin! How did this school come to be? They sleep in beds that sometimes sleepwalk and get ready in bathrooms every morning that actually make them filthier. (Fun fact: janitors in Heck don't clean, but they make things even more disgusting.)

What Is The Purpose Of The School?

Since the beginning of time, souls under 16 were immediately sent "upstairs," whether good or bad. That was until Principal Bea "Elsa" Bubb had an idea: what if she were to hold potentially bad kids in Limbo until they were old enough to be properly "assessed?" And naturally, while held, the kids could be exposed to the nuances and inverted virtues of sinning (i.e. the Seven Deadly Sins)? By the time the students turn 16 and graduate, this heavy burden on their souls would deliver them straight "down below." Couldn't hurt, could it? Her ultimate goal: impress her bosses in the Decidedly Evil Assembly of Demons ("the D.E.A.D. council") and get that promotion she feels she so desperately deserves!

The Students

Marlo Fauster

Marlo Fauster (15) is too smart for—and too bored with—her hometown of Generica, Kansas. As a result, she straddles the razor thin edge between Detention Hall and Juvenile Hall. Marlo's the kind of teen who never met an IDY (I Dare You) that she wouldn't take, which often gets her into trouble. This tendency to push against authority is her Achilles heel, and what ultimately leads her to Heck. On the flip side, Marlo's bravery-in-the-face-of-common-sense will be an essential part of her and her brother's survival and eventual escape. Though she's always found her straight-laced brother Milton annoying, Marlo believes it's her calling to encourage him to take risks and help him break out of his nerdy shell.

Milton Fauster

Milton Fauster (12 going on 40) would rather read a fantasy novel or play an RPG video game by himself than do most anything else. In school, Milton is a straight A student, which makes him the target of bullies (like Damian Ruffino). As a result, he tries his best to stay out of their way, avoiding conflict at all cost. Needless to say, Milton doesn't have many friends in school. In fact, his best friend is his narcoleptic pet ferret LUCKY. Little does he realize, but Heck actually brings out the best in him: he makes his first real friend Virgil, overcomes his anxieties, connects with his sister, and awakens his inner hero—like the characters he reads about in his beloved fantasy books—by finally standing up to Damian.

The Students

Virgil

Virgil (12) becomes Milton's first real friend after they meet in Heck. They bond over a shared love of video games, and a general dislike of being bullied. Virgil is hungry for everything: food, companionship, and acceptance. He means well, but he's a gullible, uncoordinated klutz. Virgil and Milton vow to stick together, no matter what. Not many people know this, but Virgil has the uncanny ability to tell the flavor of ice cream simply by smelling it.

Lyon Sheraton-Ling

Lyon Sheraton-Ling (14) might look perfect on the outside, but inside she's perfectly awful. She's the epitome of a spoiled brat: dictating, over-indulged, manipulative, and selfish. Amongst the living, Lyon was the most obnoxious girl in school, and pressured Marlo into shoplifting from the mall. In Heck, she continues to be Marlo's arch nemesis, but the two eventually come to realize that they need each other more than they can imagine. Lyon has her own dimwitted, snobby sidekick BORDEAUX (15), who encourages Lyon's worst instincts.

Damian

Damian (15) is a bully's bully. In the world of the living, he's a sociopathic outcast. But in Heck, Damian's a bona-fide celebrity, and granted special privileges by the teachers and Principal Bubb. Damian and Milton have a long (and tortured) history as bully and victim. The only thing stopping Damian from doing permanent damage to Milton is the secret crush he has on his sister Marlo.

The Faculty

Principal Bea "Elsa" Bubb

Principal Bea "Elsa" Bubb (665) is as ambitious as she is surly: a toxic cocktail with a bitter aftertaste. Principal Bubb spent centuries toiling in middle management "down below." Just as her star was about to descend—with a promised promotion to the D.E.A.D. council—her Machiavellian cousin, EVAN, swooped in and stole the position. The driven Bubb recalibrated her plans, however. With her covetous eyes still on the council, she proposed the Heck school as a way to show her bosses that she's creative, capable, and sadistic enough to join them. Her coddled pet, CERBERUS, is a three headed Pekinese "Guard Dog," who's all bark and no bite.

The Teachers of Heck include some of the most notorious and fiendish characters throughout history. Each has a twisted syllabus that reflects their preferred Sins: RICHARD NIXON teaches Ethics, MARY TUDOR (aka Bloody Mary) is the Home Economics teacher, and BLACKBEARD THE PIRATE teaches Physical Education.

Boogeypersons are the guards and hall monitors of Heck, who all carry pitch-sporks. Just don't call them Boogeymen ("that's boogey person please!"). Appearance-wise, they look like devilish walk-around characters at a creepy amusement park. Underneath their costume/uniform they are freakish goblins.

Season One

Episode One

OPEN IN HELL: Bea "Elsa" Bubb defends herself against accusations of dereliction of duty from the D.E.A.D. Council. Bubb proposes a new and sinister way to harvest more souls. WIPE TO: Generica, Kansas: a dull American suburb chock full of strip malls, symmetrical rows of houses, and perfectly manicured lawns. The local school is equally structured, with neat rows of desks and pencils and by-the-book teachers. To Marlo Fauster, it's as boring as, well: Hell. Her brother, Milton, doesn't mind as much. He prefers to lose himself in fantasy books and video games… anything to avoid truly engaging in the world.

The monotony is disturbed, however, when the World's Largest Marshmallow Bear comes to town, and is placed on exhibit at the local mall. Despite Milton's fear of running into his cruel nemesis—the bully Damian—Marlo drags Milton to the mall to see what all the fuss is about. Shortly after arriving, Marlo is IDY'ed (dared) by the meanest of mean girls, Lyon, and her sidekick Bordeaux, to shoplift. The mall cops are not fooled. The ensuing chase starts a comedic chain reaction that ends with Damian shooting off fireworks, and a super-natural lightning strike - with Marlo and Milton caught in the flash! After a dizzying psychedelic ride down to Limbo, they're greeted by Principal Bubb, who welcomes them to her brand spanking new "Heck School for the Soon-to-be Damned!" And just when things couldn't get any worse, down tumbles Lyon, Bordeaux and—gah!—Damian!

Episode Two

We pick up where we left off: Principal Bubb cajoles and compels the completely stunned and bickering Milton and Marlo to sign away their souls to Heck, to be held in trust until their graduation or perpetuity, whichever comes first. The ghoulish pen they use sucks their souls from their bodies and into separate jars, which are then placed in the "soul chamber" to be guarded by Anubis, a giant demon dog. There are only a few jars there, currently, but Principal Bubb promises that in short time the cavernous room will soon be teeming with the souls of students. Bubb whisks her new students away to a classroom along with several other unfortunate new students (including Lyon and Bordeaux).

Much to Milton's alarm, Damian is treated like a rock star in Heck; he's famous for his "bad deeds." The new students are forced to watch an incredibly cheesy public access quality "dis-orientation video" setting the ground rules for Heck. (Milton and Virgil meet and bond over how bad the production values are.) What they do learn is this: to pass the time, they'll be attending school until they graduate at 16. Marlo realizes that this is a few short months away for her-- and who knows what happens when you graduate?!? As they're given a tour of the school and assigned bunks in their camp cabins, Milton points out to his sister something he noticed in the dis-orientation video: they're "not technically dead yet," which means there must be a way for them to get themselves back up to the world of the living! So, there's hope! This hope is quickly tested, however, when they must spend their first terrifying night in Heck.

Episodes Three to Thirteen

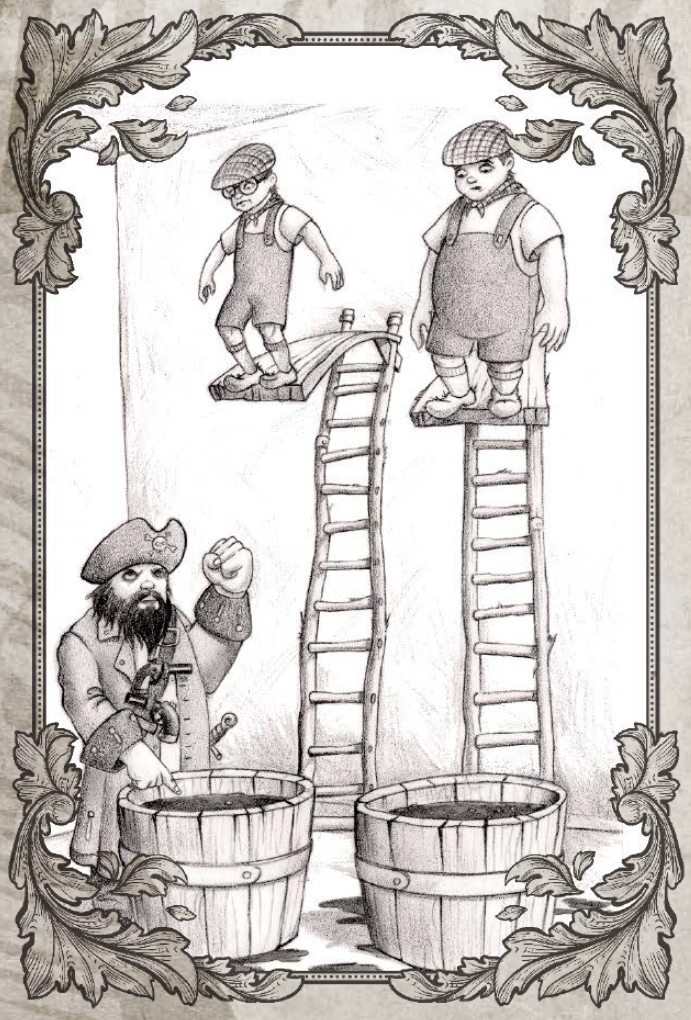
On a fundamental level, Milton and Marlo don't understand Heck, which seems to operate on controlled chaos. Nothing makes sense! Especially the classes they're forced to attend, which are a mix of terrible, tedious, and patently unfair. They take chemistry with Dr. P., a prolific inventor of soft drinks and exploding rock candy. In his class, they spend their time concocting sugary sweet, yet dangerous concoctions, usually resulting in a trip to the infirmary or a stomach ache. Blackbeard the Pirate teaches gym, where competition and "winning at all costs" seems to be the norm. Mary Tudor (Bloody Mary) is tasked with teaching Home Economics, but the supremely entitled Queen can't be bothered with teaching, so she mostly just harangues her students about how "plebian" they are, or gives them meaningless and horrible tasks and rewards the student who gets everyone else to do their work for them! And yes, Richard Nixon teaches Ethics – the only way to succeed in his class is to cheat. Milton, the straight A student, tries to do the best he can in his courses, but everything he does is wrong to these teachers. Marlo, it turns out, is a natural at many of the terrible lessons these teachers impart. Strangely, she excels, much to the consternation of Lyon and Bordeaux, who try to sabotage her every chance they get. Damian doesn't even have to attend classes because he's tested out of them all. He's a hall monitor, detention monitor, cafeteria monitor, and all around pest to Milton and Virgil who try to avoid him at every turn. Damian is so hooked up he even has access to the teachers' lounge!

Marlo starts to warm up to Heck (which is easy, as it's unbearably hot), and becomes uninterested in returning back to the world of the living. Milton isn't giving up, though. He and Virgil create a map of Heck based on what they saw when they entered, and they do some secret exploring after their classes, looking for a way out. Milton is often too scared to push things too far, so he sends Lucky out as his scout. Principal Bubb's pet dog Cerberus, a three headed Pekinese, quickly becomes Lucky's enemy and they have cat/mouse adventures.

One day when Principal Bubb is out of her office, Milton musters up the courage and sneaks in, thinking the clue to escaping Heck must be in there somewhere. Bubb returns with Damian in tow. Gulp! Milton hides. And this allows him to overhear Bubb gloating to Damian and telling him the story of how Heck came to be and how he got here. We learn (and we see) that Bubb's cousin and rival Evan undermined her: making her look bad to the D.E.A.D Council and stealing her promotion. Bubb proposed the Heck school. We see all the details that went into setting up the school and her interviewing potential teachers.

Eventually, Bubb retells the story of the first episode, but from her POV. Turns out Bubb subtly arranged things so Marlo, Lyon, Bordeaux, and Damian would be struck by the lightning (a detail that wasn't easy, as she needed to fill out forms in triplicate to requisition a lightning strike). Bubb makes it clear she was seeking out "bad kids" like Damian, who takes that as a compliment. Damian realizes Milt-nerd doesn't fit in and asks why he's here. Bubb explains, with a tinge of annoyance, Milton was caught in the explosion – an accident.

Milton now realizes the purpose of the school: to take "bad kids" before their time on Earth is up and make them worse so that their souls—when judged—will go straight to Hell when they turn 16. So all the classes they are forced to endure are secretly about teaching kids to embrace sinning! Once it's safe to sneak out of Principal Bubb's office, Milton explains all this to Marlo. For the first time, the siblings are on the same page and start working together. They have to get out! Though initially conflicted, Marlo makes a choice to let Lyon and Bordeaux in on the escape. They're from her hometown, and she used to be friends with Lyon.

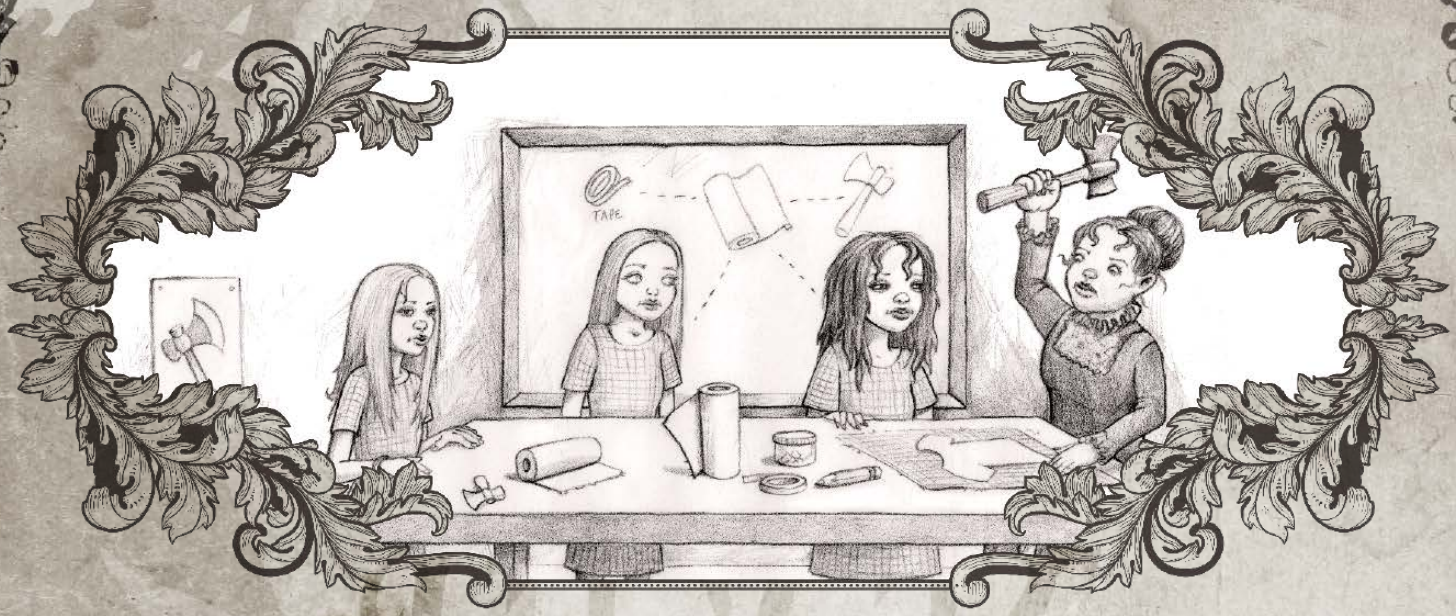


How will they get out? Marlo suggests the way they came in. Milton figures out the logistics. First, they have to get their hands on some of Damian's rockets (he has an endless supply in Heck, and Marlo effortlessly charms Damian for a couple of big ones). Next, they have to sneak past dozens of creepy Boogeypersons. Just as they're about to launch themselves on Damian's rockets, dippy Bordeaux snaps, jealous of the seeming friendship between Marlo and Lyon. The timing couldn't be worse! An alarm is tripped. Milton and Virgil bravely hold off the Boogeypersons, allowing Marlo to launch herself. She flies up through the garbage chute and whooshes through the afterlife tunnels and right up to the surface of Earth.

Now back home, Marlo breathes a sigh of relief. But this relief is short lived, as Marlo realizes she's not fully alive; she's a ghost! Sure, it is fun to haunt and torment Principal Lemons. But seeing her Dad all alone and missing his children kickstarts Marlo's seldom used conscience and spurs her to return to Heck (another ghost tells her how). She's been invigorated with a new mission: to escape Heck with all the kids! None of them belong there!

The following day, Principal Bubb is more tense and crazier than usual. One of the members of the D.E.A.D Council is coming to visit and inspect the school. What Bubb doesn't expect is who the Council Demon's Head of Office is: her cousin Evan—the Machiavellian jerk who got her in trouble in the first place and landed the promotion that she was hoping for. Evan's here to gloat. However, things don't go according to Evan's plan, and he's shocked to find himself impressed with the Heck School. Evan can't take it: especially when Bubb gloats to him now. Evan realizes that Bubb is a success and he's determined to destroy her.

Later, after the inspection, Evan (disguised as a Boogeyperson) tells Marlo that to really escape (and not be a ghost) you need to take your soul with you. He even directs her to a secret exit that will take her back to Earth moments before her demise so that she can avoid ever dying in the first place. Evan smirks to himself: he has planted the seeds for his ultimate sabotage. He speculates Principal Bubb will be demoted to cleaning the toilets of Hell when the kids escape.



With this new knowledge, Marlo hatches an elaborate "Great Escape" plan. This time she doesn't share the plan with the rest of the kids – the stakes are too high. But before she can act, Marlo is whisked off by Boogeypersons. All the teachers have been tasked with helping Marlo cram for her S.A.T.s, which she must take in a couple of days. Time is running out! Marlo sends a desperate message to her brother (a call back to her brother texting her for help in Episode 1). Milton gathers the courage and helps her sneak off before she has to take her S.A.T.s. But the clock is ticking. If Marlo is caught, she'll have to take her S.A.T.s—and be sent to Hell.

First, they'll need to sneak past Anubis (who guards the Soul chamber) and retrieve all of the soul jars. Next, Marlo will have to figure out how to hijack the school bus (from the driver Charon), while the kids are already on it travelling back to their camp cabins. When Damian realizes what Marlo is doing, he tries to stop her, leading to a very dangerous bus ride! Milton stands up to Damian and becomes the hero that Marlo always knew he could be. The bus smashes out of Heck and back to Earth! The kids are back home and in their bodies moments before they die. With foreknowledge, they avoid the moment of death!

Season Two

We pick up a week later. Milton and Marlo are back home in Generica, Kansas. But something is wrong: they aren't totally comfortable being home. Milton tries to tell people (even national talk shows!) about what happened to them in limbo, but no one believes him. He's a joke. Sort of like he was at the beginning of Season 1, but on a bigger scale. Lyon seems to have quickly forgotten that she became friends again with Marlo and she is back to her old obnoxious ways.

"Down below," Bubb quickly goes into damage control and convinces her bosses on the D.E.A.D. Council that all of the kids that escaped can legally be brought back because they signed a contract. The afterlife "owns" their souls. Despite her cousin Evan trying to turn the screws and get Bubb in serious trouble, the D.E.A.D. Council gives her a reprieve. In a series of lightning flashes, all of the former Heck students are returned to limbo.

But this season, Bubb has some educational competition! Her rival, Evan, has opened his own school hoping to outshine his cousin and steal her thunder as usual. They both want to make their Heck schools the best school—the gold standard for what the D.E.A.D. Council hopes will be a teeming ecosystem of specialized schools to harvest more souls for Hell.

Our cast of characters is split up amongst the two schools, coming together for interschool events and competitions. Meanwhile, as in Season One, Milton and Marlo are determined to escape and this time they have more knowledge. In addition to recouping their souls, they will also need to destroy the contracts they originally signed in Season 1. Not to be fooled, Bubb has hidden their souls in another realm of limbo making escape (and return to the real world intact) nearly impossible.

The final episodes of the season are all about the competition between the schools to determine who the D.E.A.D. Council will make Superintendent of Heck. It's close, but Evan has the upper hand because he's cheating. Unbeknownst to Principal Bubb, he has the legendary "Map of All Existence" (he stole from a demon), which allows unfettered access to every realm in the afterlife. Evan uses the map to anticipate where Bubb and her students are during the contests to thwart them. Milton and Marlo put together a plan which simultaneously destroys the two schools, and in the chaos steal the "Map of All Existence" from Evan!

Season Three

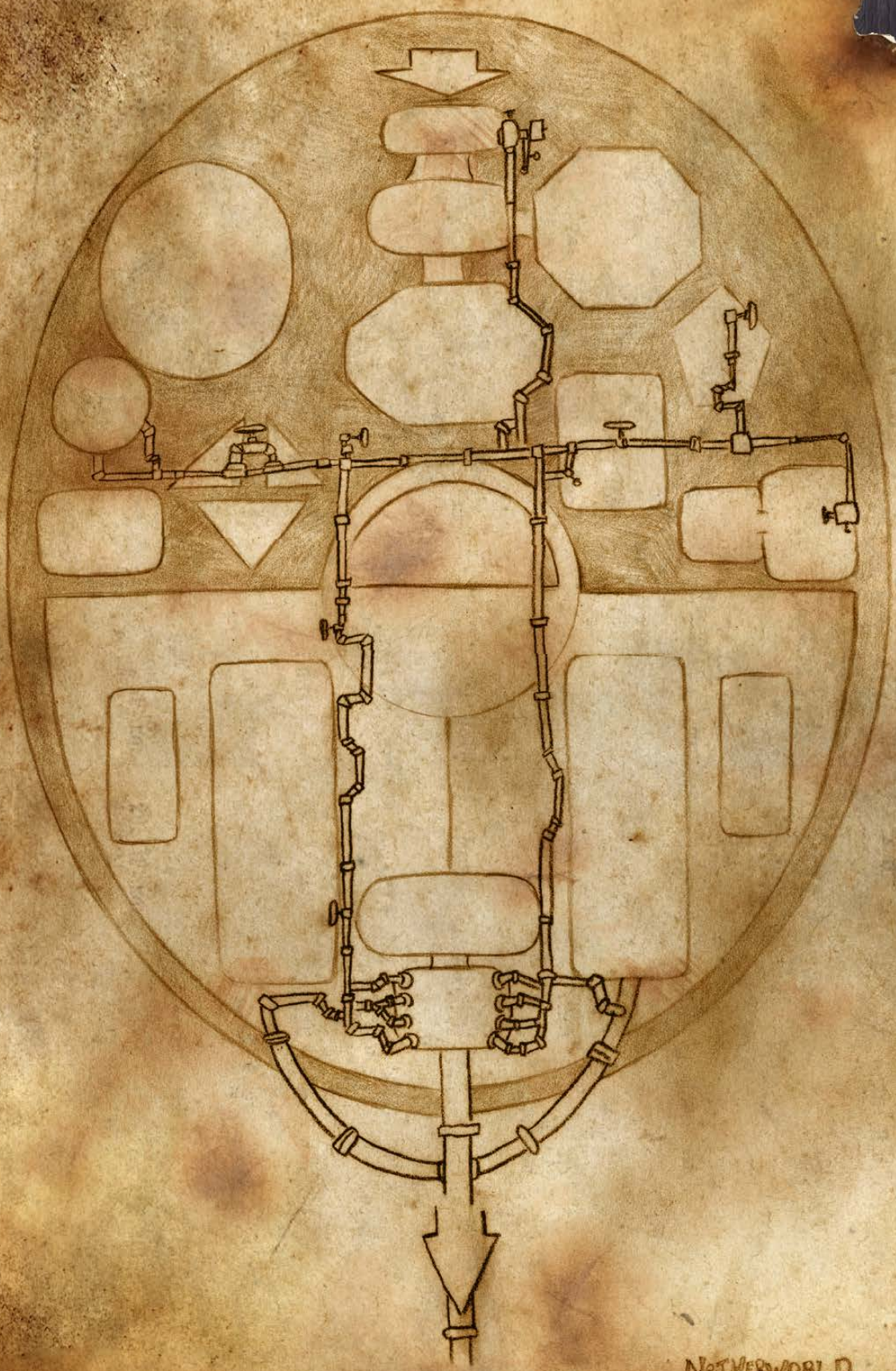
Milton, Marlo, Virgil, Lyon, and Bordeaux (and some new friends they made in Season 2) put aside their differences and use the "Map of All Existence" to travel across the numerous realms of limbo, to "down below," and to "upstairs" in search of their souls and afterlife contracts. As part of their journey, they pass through each circle of Heck, each ruled by a corresponding D.E.A.D. Council member.

Meanwhile, Bubb and Evan are still jostling for position in the wake of their competition in Season 2. Eventually, Evan takes over both Heck schools (now rebuilt), consolidating his power. Simultaneously, the Fausters and friends complete their quest and destroy their afterlife contracts: collecting their souls and escaping to the world of the living! The Fausters and their collection of friends are finally back home. Again, like the end of Season 1, it is as if no time has passed on Earth, even though significant time has passed down below.

Season Four

But before the kids are even settled – there's another crisis! Virgil is zapped by lightning, then Lyon, then Bordeaux…it all seems somehow familiar. But this time everything is different. It turns out that kids all over the world are being struck by lightning—and not just former Heck students—but all kids! The world is aware that something supernatural is occurring. Panic ensues! The Fausters are untouched and become the last kids on Earth!

That's when they receive a surprise visit: Bea "Elsa" Bubb herself. She claims she's no longer an enemy and explains that her Cousin Evan has taken over the D.E.A.D. Council. He's gone mad with power and is exploiting the new rules of the afterlife. Most egregiously, he's taking kids indiscriminately, regardless of their kid sins. The Fausters are left alone because they've proven to be such a pain in the ass that Evan doesn't want them mucking up his plans. Bubb apologizes that this was, sort of, all her fault because she was the one who convinced the "powers that be" to change the rules slightly when she started the Heck School. But even she thinks he's taken things too far. So, the Fausters team up with Ex-Principal Bubb to help put things back to the way they were and defeat Evan. Ultimately, the Fausters are successful, and kids are returned from the underworld back to Earth. The biggest of miracles has happened, and families around the world rejoice! In the end of the series, Bubb is finally promoted to the D.E.A.D. Council, and all the Heck schools are permanently closed. Bubb says she'll see the Fausters one of these days - but not for a long, long time!



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